A

POEM

On the WAR

IN THE

WEST-INDIES

UNDER

ADMIRAL VERNON.

By a COUNTRY CURATE.

——*Conamur tenues* [illegible] HORAT.

Nam

Magnæ mentis opus, nec de lodice paranda
Attonitæ, Currus, & Equos Faciesque Deorum
Aspicere, & qualis Ratulum confundat Erynnis.

JUVENAL.

LONDON:
Printed for T. ASTLEY in St. Paul's Church-yard; (Price 6 d.)

BRITISH MUSEUM

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A POEM ON THE WAR under Admiral VERNON.

ASSIST, my Muſe, brave VERNON's Acts rehearſe,
Nor let the Subject ſuffer by my Verſe;
Draw him to haughty *Spain* preſcribing Laws,
And acting Wonders in his *Country*'s Cauſe.

LONG had *Britannia* now enjoy'd her Eaſe,
Long had her dreaded Thunder ſlept in Peace;

That Thunder which ſo oft' had ſcowr'd the Main,
And hurl'd juſt Vengeance on the Realms of *Spain*:
Hiſpania's *Genius* marks th' inactive Scene,
With future Miſchiefs teeming in her Brain;
She Eyes each powder'd Captain with Delight,
And hopes the *Britons* have forgot to Fight;
" Rouze then ſhe cries, *Iberia*; Rouze, regain
" Thy Pow'r once more, thy Empire on the *Main*;
" Dare but aſſert thy *Rights*, thou muſt ſucceed,
" And haughty *Britain* in her turn ſhall Bleed.

FIR'D with falſe Hopes away the Goddeſs flies,
Whilſt fancied Vengeance Lightens in her Eyes,
To find *Bellona*, peſt of Human Race,
A Pow'r averſe to all the Joys of Peace:
Midſt the cold *Alps* the dreadful Pow'r ſhe found,
By her own fav'rite *Swiſs* encirc'd round;
Thoſe Sons of *Rapine*, ready to Obey
Whate'er ſhe Dictates in the ſhape of *Pay*.

STRAIT

STRAIT " where ſhe cries is now thy rattling Carr?
" The Blaze of Armies, and the Din of War?
" How art thou chang'd from what thou waſt of *Yore*,
" All bath'd in Blood on *Phrygia*'s fertile Shore?
" When by thy infl'ence Great *Achilles* fir'd,
" Purſu'd as faſt as frighted *Troy* retir'd:
" Shall FLEURY awe the Nations with his Nod?
" And ſit at once of Peace and War the *God*?
" What tho' the *Eaſtern World* is now at Eaſe?
" Tho' CHARLES has deign'd t' accept inglorious Peace?
" Tho' *Ruſſia*'s Sons have ſheath'd their Conqu'ring Sword,
" The *Poles* ſubmitted to their rightful *Lord*?
" Let *Diſcord* only ſound her dire alarms,
" And lo! two *World*'s are riſing up in Arms:
" *Iberia*'s Son's for Empire of the Main
" Have often fought, as often fought in Vain;
" E'en

late Emperor of Germany

" E'en now they meditate to gain their *Right*,
" And want but thee to urge them to the Fight;
" Of *France* a * fav'rite fills *Iberia*'s Throne,
" Who knows but *France* may make their Wrongs her own?
" And think how great thy Praiſe, couldſt thou engage
" Againſt his will in War old FLEURY's peaceful Age,

THE *Goddeſs* nought replies, but *Diſcord* calls,
And " Haſte ſhe cries to fam'd *Madritium*'s Walls;
" Of War they Burn already with Deſire,
" Haſte then this Inſtant, Fann the riſing fire;
" There all thy Baleful influence impart,
" And root the thoughts of *Peace* from ev'ry Heart.

FIR'D at her Charge, away the *Fury* flies
On Wicker Wings, and Cleaves the Yielding Skies
Till from afar ſhe ſpies th' *Eſcurial*'s Heights,
Then like a *Vultur* on the ſummitt Lights

Re-

* The *Queen*

Revolving there her dire Commiſſion Waits
So long, the Fam'd *Convention* reach'd the Gates:
Scar'd at the Sight, ſhe ſtrait aſſumes the *Queen*;
Such is her Voice and ſuch her haughty Mien;
Th' Imperious Conſort of Great *Philip*'s Throne,
Too proud to bear Advice, except her own:
The fury, thus conceal'd from prying Eyes,
With Words like theſe the wav'ring *Monarch* plies.

" Lo! where thy laſting Infamy they bring,
" Go, * pay thy Ranſom like ſome Captive *King*:
" Go, and reſign thy Rights upon the *Main*,
" And in thoſe Rights renounce the Throne of *Spain*,
" From whatſoe'er they bid thee tamely part,
" Do; ſtill the akings of that Woman's-Heart;
" But think who'll fear thy *Frown*, or court thy *Smile*,
" Henceforth, inſulted by a *Pigmy Iſle*?

Stung with her Speech, the Royal Breaſt complies,
And ev'ry peaceful Reſolution flies;

Not

* Alluding to the 95000 *l.* Stipulated to be paid by the *Convention*.

Not that the *King* alone the Impulse found,
It reach'd to all his Counsellors around;
Nor rests the Fury till the gen'ral Voice
Declares for War, and ratifies her Choice;
So, when a Tempest on the Deep descends,
At first the heaving *Ocean* hardly bends,
But, as the Hurricane more furious blows,
Less and less smooth the Ruffled Surface grows;
At length the raging Billows foam and roar,
Swell Mountain-high, and lash the distant Shore.

And now all Prospect of a Peace is o'er,
Conventions now employ their Thoughts no more;
Resolv'd on fighting *Victory's their Theme*,
Not once of Losses or Defeats they Dream;
Fools that they are to Hope upon the Main
Britannia flying from the Arms of *Spain*;
Too late alas! their Folly shall they own,
And bend for Peace to *Britain's* injur'd Throne!

For

For lo! Great *GEORGE* his *Iſlanders* alarms,
Fires with paſt Wrongs and calls them forth to Arms;
Two potent Fleets, for diff'rent Taſks deſign'd,
Spread their Broad Sails to catch the riſing Wind;
High on the Decks two mighty Chiefs appear,
Brave HADDOCK there, Immortal VERNON here:
HADDOCK our *Fabius* guards us from the foe,
Whilſt VERNON Sails to ſtrike the diſtant Blow;
Snatch'd in an *Eaſtern* Gale his Fleet is loſt,
Strait the † *Cape*'s doubl'd, the *Atlantick* croſs'd,
And, ev'ry danger of the *Tropick* o'er,
Our other DRAKE arrives on *India*'s Shore.

AND now the HERO's lab'ring thoughts prepare
Plans with Succeſs to Crown th' approaching War:
Mark where his force the foe can moſt annoy,
Where reach their *Towns*, or where their *Forts* deſtroy.

† Finiſter.

A Place there is, to which each circling Year
Hiſpania's Son's for *India*'s Wealth repair;
Fam'd for its beauteous *Port* of old, of late
Much better known for HOSIER's wretched Fate;
Before the *Town* extends a *Bay*, whoſe form
Secures their Ships from ev'ry riſing Storm,
In Danger ſtill the Sailor's ſafe Retreat,
When the Winds bluſter and the Billows beat;
Two *Caſtles* guard the Entrance tow'rds the *Main*,
The *Glory* one, and one the *Strength* of *Spain*;
Whilſt a third *Fort* behind, the Work to Crown,
Projects a-croſs and ſaves th' Important *Town*.

HITHER the *HERO* firſt directs his Courſe,
With *ſix* tall Ships of War, no mighty Force,
Yet Force ſufficient deem'd by him, who knew
What *Britiſh* Hearts, and *Britiſh* Hands cou'd do,

As theſe approach *Hiſpania*'s Son's afar
From their high Ramparts 'ſpy the floating War;
Scorn his ſmall Fleet, in fancy ſink their Foe,
And ſee them Drowning in the waves below.

While, thus Exulting in imagin'd Might,
Spain on her Walls impatient waits the Fight,
Big with her Fate, lo! where in dread Array,
Britannia's Squadron plough their wat'ry Way.
High in the Van Intrepid Brown appears,
Leads on th' Attack and for the *Harbour* ſteers,
Swift as the Falcon cleaves the Yielding Skies,
Where Dangers threat the daring *Hero* flies:
Before the *Fort* at length his Anchor falls,
A hundred Cannons Thundring from the Walls:
Yet ſcorns his Heart th' unequal fight to fly,
Reſoy'd to Conquer, or prepar'd to die.
This *Herbert* ſees, and for the *Chief* afraid;
Bears to his Side and brings him timely aid;

Whoſe Thunder ſeconded by thine, brave *Main*,
Soon proves ſome Ballance for the Force of *Spain*:
And now her Dream of *Victory* is o'er,
The *Fort* is deem'd impregnable no more;
Behind its Walls each *Hero* learns to fear,
And *VERNON* ſeems already but too near;
When lo! his Flag Diſplay'd, tremendous ſight,
Full Sail he comes to animate the Fight;
Scorns that his Guns ſhou'd idly waſte their Breath,
And boldly Anchors in the jaws of Death.

HISPANIA trembling ſees in him her fate,
And ſummons all her Force tho' now too late;
Full on his Ship their whole Artill'ry roar,
In ſuch dread fort it ſeem'd not War before;
Againſt the *Chief* their Efforts all employ,
As if 'twere conqueſt *VERNON* to deſtroy:
Like *Mars* the HERO on his Deck appears,
Directs the Storm, and all the Battle bears.

Incessant thus both Sides with equal might
And equal rage maintain the doubtful Fight;
Spain scorns to yield, *Britannia* to retire,
Whilst now the *Fort*, the *Fleet*'s now wrapt in fire;
So, when two Winds from adverse Quarters storm,
Work up black Clouds, and angry Tempests form,
With ev'ry driving blast Hoarse Thunders roll,
Quick breaks the Light'ning's flash from Pole to Pole;
The whole *Horizon* takes the livid Gleam,
And ev'ry Part by fits appears on Flame.

At length *Iberia*'s baffled Sons despair,
Remit their Force, and scarce maintain the War,
Not Vernon so, still Thund'ring on their Walls,
Thick and more Thick he drives his Vengeful Balls;
With such resistless Force his Cannons play,
The Fortress shakes, the shatter'd Stone gives way,
The Guns dismount, the frighted Guards retire,
Desert their Posts, nor longer dare his fire:

The

The *Chief* his hardy Tars with Tranſport calls,
Bids man the Boats and Scale th' abandon'd Walls;
The hardy Tar with joy his *Chief* obeys,
And on the Walls *Britannia*'s Croſs diſplays.

THIS *Fort* once gain'd, the reſt for *Peace* intreat,
And find his Mercy as his Courage great;
His ſacred Word once paſt, no Villain fears,
Not * *Apolonko* Trembles for his Ears;
Againſt the *Forts* alone his Arms he turns,
Their Ramparts levels, their Foundations burns,
Thoſe *Forts*, ſo late *Hiſpania*'s ſtrength and boaſt,
Now ſmoke in Ruins on her *Naked Coaſt*.

WHILST *VERNON* thus his *Country*'s Foe diſarms,
Fame with the News *Iberia*'s *Chief* alarms;
Their Caſtles ruin'd, as their Forces beat,
Prove *Britain*'s Triumph and their Loſs Compleat.

Stung

Stung with th' unwelcome News, he knows no Reſt,
Shame and Revenge diſtract his boiling Breaſt;
What ſhall he do? How wipe away this Stain?
What? but encounter *VERNON* on the Main?
Then ſends a haughty Challenge to his *Fleet*,
And madly braves the Force he dreads to meet.

The Challenge read, the *HERO* graſps his Sword,
And, grant th' inſulting *Spaniard* keep his Word;
Grant this, he cries, Ye Powers Divine; nor more,
But inſtant weighs for *Carthagena*'s Shore.

Before the *Port* arriv'd, his Flag he rears,
Demands the fight, but not a Sail appears;
Cloſe in his *Port*, the Boaſter from afar
Survey'd the Danger, and declin'd the War.
So the ſell *Tyger*, when he's not in Sight,
Swells his proud Heart, and dares the *Lion*'s might,
But, ſoon as e'er the Royal *Brute* appears,
Thinks on his Den and reaſſumes his fears.

FAIN wou'd brave *VERNON* force him to the Main;
Each paſs he tries, but tries them all in Vain;
Fort behind *Fort* his trembling Fleet immures,
Whilſt Boom on Boom the *Harbour*'s Mouth ſecures.
Enrag'd at length, as round he caſts his Eyes,
He ſees where *Carthagena*'s Turrets riſe,
Vows for his Cowardice the *Town* ſhall *Pay*,
Then Bids Deſtruction from his Mortars play.
Swift as the Word the ready Bombs appear,
Like Meteors blaze, and float along the Air;
Burſt o'er th' affrighted *Town* with dreadful Sound,
And Burſting, ſcatter Deſolation round:
The weak Inhabitant, with wild Surpriſe,
Views the red Tempeſt ruſhing from the Skies,
Curſes the Coward, and his uſeleſs *Fleet*,
Who brav'd a Force they wanted Heart to meet.

And

And now the Place had fall'n the *Victors Prey*,
But Fate diverts his Arms another Way;
Britannia's Trade for ſwift Protection calls,
And ſends her *Chief* to raze *Lorenzo*'s Walls;
Seated on Rocks, th' Important *Fortreſs* ſtands,
Where *Chagre*'s Waves divide *Peruvia*'s Lands,
But neither Rocks, nor Ramparts can ſuſtain
The ſhock of *VERNON* and his charging Train:
The *Fort*, too weak his Thunder to engage,
Unbars its Gates, nor Tempts his utmoſt Rage.

YET ſtill unſung remains another Scene,
Spain once more trembling for her *Carthagene*:
Th' Attack renew'd, once more methinks I hear
Thy Cannons *VERNON* thund'ring in my Ear:
Oh! did the tuneful Nine their Bard inſpire
With Numbers, lofty as thy Deeds require;
I'd then each Action of the Day rehearſe,
And draw the Battle raging in my Verſe:
Before the *Port*, conſpicuous ſhouldſt thou ſtand,
In Danger foremoſt, foremoſt in Command;

Close by thy Side, here *Ogle*, *Leslock* there,
Should rouze their Tars, and animate the War;
Whilst, as each *Chief* directs his forceful Balls,
Here rocks *Iago*, there St. *Philip* falls;
St. *Joseph*, *Chamba* swell the dreadful Tale,
And *Bocha-Chica* last begins to fail.
Struck at the Sight, within shou'd *Spain* appear,
Dismay'd each Heart, each Face aghast with Fear;
Before the *Victors* shou'd her Sons give way,
Nor e'en her Mightiest dare dispute the Day:
Not that I'd make the Living all my Care,
I'd Sing each *Hero* falling in the War;
Each dead Commander I'd to Life recall,
Great *Aub'ry*, *Douglass*, Glorious in their fall;
And *Irwin's* Colours too shou'd drop beneath the Ball:
But hold, this Task to thee the Gods refuse,
Reserv'd for *POPE's*, or for some *Abler Muse*.

FINIS.